



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

My Dear Colleagues and Students,

The Hostos family joins the world family in extending our gratitude and condolences to those of us who were touched and supported by the life and work of Chadwick Boseman.

On Friday, August 28, 2020 the world lost a true superhero. A man who participated in cinematic feats such as *Black Panther*, *Get on Up*, and *42* while battling a debilitating form of cancer for the last four years. As a true fighter, Chadwick Boseman continued to bring us joy through the silver screen while undergoing chemotherapy and countless surgeries. Friday was also Jackie Robinson Day which celebrates the man he portrayed in "*42*" who broke the color barrier in major league baseball. It was also the anniversary of the famed March on Washington for civil rights. In the midst of his battle, Boseman kept inspiring children, by visiting St. Jude's Research Hospital in Tennessee. On Instagram yesterday, the hospital [posted](#) that he "brought with him not only toys for our patients but also joy, courage and inspiration." Boseman represented humanity for so many and with his passing, Black America, and all of us who embrace this powerful sense of loss, continue to grieve in an already difficult year for the black community.

Born on November 29, 1976 in Anderson, South Carolina, Boseman had an affinity for the performing arts from a young age. He wrote his first play, *Crossroads* during his junior year of high school. He went on to graduate from Howard University in Washington, D.C. where a connection with a faculty member and fellow actress, Phylicia Rashad would lead him to have his tuition at the British American Drama Academy's Midsummer program paid by a famous thespian, Denzel Washington. As Boseman poignantly said of his benefactor at the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Awards in 2019, "an offering from a sage and a king is more than silver and gold. It is a seed of hope, a bud of faith". His courageous decision to keep his cancer battle private allows us to preserve his image of the characters he portrayed. Washington's description of Boseman as a "gentle soul" drew us nearer to him, making his loss to the black community immeasurable, particularly as an entertainer who made us all care. It is therefore fitting, that [yesterday CNN announced](#) the most liked tweet of all time, belongs to [#WakandaForever](#). A tribute fit for a King.



When Great Trees Fall

By: Maya Angelou

When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down
in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.

When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses
eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words
unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.

Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of
dark, cold
caves.

And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.

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